362.4
R342
1946/47

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

REPORT OF

THE BUREAU FOR THE BLIND

For the Fiscal Year

July 1, 1946 to June 30, 1947

To the

STATE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WELFARE

THE LIBRARY OF THE
JUL 26 1948
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

362.4
R342
1946/47

Room 503
40 Fountain Street
Providence

Mr. Edward P. Reidy, Director
Rhode Island State Department of Social Welfare

Dear Mr. Reidy:

I beg to submit herewith the annual report of the Bureau for the Blind for the fiscal year ending June thirtieth, nineteen hundred and forty-seven.

Respectfully yours,

Leonore Y. Gay
Administrator
Bureau for the Blind

State of Rhode Island

Department of Social Welfare

Edward P. Reidy, Director

Bureau for the Blind

Staff as of 6-30-47

Leonore Y. Gay	Administrator
**Catherine R. Drew	Acting Case Work Supervisor
Elanie Ham McBurnie	Consultant, Medical Social Work
Cora G. Carr	Rehabilitation Counsellor
Bertha Mitchell	Senior Social Worker
Mary Gallagher	Senior Social Worker
*Ellen P. Curran	Home Teacher
Gladys G. Slide	Guide to Home Teacher
*Mary J. Cherlin	Home Teacher
Irene Thereault	Guide to Home Teacher
Evelyn M. Bird	Home Industries Supervisor
Ethel Wallace (half time)	Automobile Driver (Asst. to H. I. Supv.)
Charles W. Donahue (half time)	Automobile Driver (Truck Driver)
Aaron J. Slom	Senior Vending Stand Supervisor
Charles M. Gaffney	Vending Stand Supervisor
Olive G. Norton (7-7-47)	Principal Clerk Typist
Mary G. Sydney	Junior Accountant
Helen E. R. O'Neill	Senior Clerk Stenographer
Elizabeth Ann Regan	Senior Clerk Stenographer
Claire Y. Mailloux	Account Clerk

Medical Consultants

Raymond F. Hacking, M.D.	Consulting Ophthalmologist
James P. Deery, M.D.	Medical Consultant

Advisory Council
(Appointed by the Governor)

Raymond F. Hacking, M.D., Chairman	Serves until March 1, 1952
Mrs. Lytton W. Doolittle, Secretary	" " March 1, 1948
Mrs. Edward J. Burrell	" " March 1, 1949
*Jack Despres	" " March 1, 1950
Ralph G. Gold	" " March 1, 1951

* Blind

** On leave of absence without pay.

BUREAU FOR THE BLIND

FUNCTIONS

In 1940 the Bureau first began to expand its functions as a result of the 1939 Survey of the American Foundation for the Blind, initiated by the Governor at the request of the Lions Clubs of the Rhode Island District. Up to that time the Bureau's personnel numbered nine: 2 home teachers, 2 guides, 2 social workers, 2 clerks and a "Supervisor" (now the Administrator). In accordance with Survey recommendations three professional positions were added between 1940 and 1943; a medical social worker (later reclassified as medical social consultant), a home industries supervisor, and a rehabilitation counsellor. These positions were added in order that the Bureau might more effectively fulfill the duties assigned to it by Chapter 184 of the General Laws of 1938 and by further legislation in 1940, redefining and substantiating those duties and transferring the Bureau to the Department of Social Welfare where it originated.

Two new programs have been added to the Bureau's activities since 1939: the Vending Stand Program, initiated as a state program in November 1940 (approved in principle by the American Foundation for the Blind Survey), and the Federal-State Program of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Blind, in operation since June 1944.

The Bureau is a service agency. It maintains a register of all blind and near-blind persons in the State; it obtains medical statistics on causes of blindness; it provides for treatment to retain or restore sight; and stresses the importance of conservation of vision. Although education of blind children is the responsibility of the State Department of Education, the Bureau studies each child and recommends to the Director of Education a plan suitable for the educational development of each. No direct financial assistance is provided by the Bureau, but the Administrator serves as consultant to the Division of Public Assistance on matters concerning the Federally matched aid to the blind program, administered by that Division. The Bureau furnishes home instruction in Braille and handwork, conducts sales of products made by blind persons, and promotes and supervises employment on vending stands. In partnership with the Federal Vocational Rehabilitation Program, it provides vocational counseling, training and placement in suitable employment for the potentially employable blind. A great deal of interpretation is made to sighted persons concerning the abilities and special needs and problems of the blind in its public relations programs and in the course of its service to blind individuals.

STAFF

At the end of the year the personnel consisted of the administrator, acting casework supervisor (on leave of absence without pay), medical social consultant, rehabilitation counsellor, two senior social workers, two blind home teachers and their guides, a home industries supervisor, a senior vending stand supervisor, a vending stand supervisor, a junior accountant, an account clerk, 2 senior clerk stenographers, and 2 part time automobile drivers who assist with the home industries program. There was one clerical vacancy: that of principal clerk, who resigned in May 1947. Other classes in which vacancies existed during periods from two weeks to four and one-half months were: automobile driver, senior vending stand supervisor, and vending stand supervisor. Two physicians, one of whom is an ophthalmologist, gave consultation service, and an advisory council of five, appointed by the Governor, gave service as a Council and individually.

It had become impossible for the administrator to give close supervision to seven professional members of the staff, pursuing four different though related professions, as well as to direct two business enterprises, home industries and vending stands, besides fulfilling her administrative duties. The Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation required a strong rehabilitation unit within the Bureau headed by a "Chief of Rehabilitation". This function was assigned to and capably fulfilled by a senior social worker whose duties are still awaiting reclassification to a supervisory class.

The Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation paid the entire salaries of the rehabilitation counsellor and a senior clerk stenographer; 95% of the salary of the senior vending stand supervisor; 50% of the salary of the medical social consultant, who also served the Division of Rehabilitation in the Department of Education; and 25% of the salaries of the administrator, the acting case work supervisor, who is also chief of vocational rehabilitation, and the two senior social workers. These percentages represent the amount of time devoted to rehabilitation. The above personnel constituted the vocational rehabilitation unit within the Bureau. The Federal Government also pays about a third of the Bureau's operating costs, since about a third of its work was devoted to Vocational Rehabilitation. The Federal Government likewise paid 50% of case service costs (vocational training, readers' fees, necessary fees for physical restoration treatment, etc.) to make blind civilians more advantageously employable.

A major staff loss and a great loss to the blind of Rhode Island and of the country was that sustained when Miss Mary Eunice French retired in September 1946, after completing forty-two years of outstanding pioneer service and national leadership as Home Teacher of the Blind.

YEAR'S WORK

THE BLIND REGISTER

The social service staff continued to comb the Register for any whose vision might be improved through treatment and for potentially employable blind people who might benefit under the Vocational Rehabilitation program. New situations were evaluated with these objectives in mind, and many individual plans were initiated. Leadership and recruiting techniques as well as case work are often necessary to reinforce a blind person's courage or to give practical direction to his steps towards greater independence and self support. Intensive case work was done with fifty-seven persons, many of whom were of employable age. The social workers and home teachers have also concentrated their attention on service to preschool children and children not in school although of school age, trying to devise individual plans for their educational and emotional development. Occasional consultation service by the Child Guidance Clinic continued to be helpful in this phase of our work.

Blind Register* as of June 30, 1946		952
Persons added during year (new 105) reopened 3)		108
Gross Register		1,060
Names removed during year		54
Reasons:		
Died	33	
Moved out of State	10	
Not blind according to definition and not in need of service	4	
Sight restored and no longer in need of service	5	
Lack of evidence of blindness	2	
Blind Register as of June 30, 1947		1,006

The Register shows that 36 of the 39 cities and towns have blind residents, the exceptions being Charlestown, Narragansett and West Greenwich.

YEAR'S WORK, The Blind Register (continued)

Age groupings for Register as of June 30, 1947

Birth	thru 5 years	22
6	" 10 "	28
11	" 20 "	72
21	" 30 "	108
31	" 40 "	80
41	" 50 "	99
51	" 60 "	136
61	" 70 "	169
71	" 80 "	141
81	" 90 "	101
91	" 100 "	25
101	" 110 "	3
Age Unknown		22
	Total	1,006

* The Bureau for the Blind uses the definition of economic blindness recommended by the Central Committee on Statistics for the Blind and used by the Social Security Administration:

> "Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses"; or an equivalent handicap, "a field defect in which the peripheral field has contracted to such an extent that the widest diameter of the visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees."

Broadly interpreted, this means that we consider a person blind if an approved eye doctor reports that he can see at twenty feet, what the person with normal vision can see at two hundred feet; or if his "side vision" is so impaired that he is equally handicapped in traveling.

Of the total Register, 26 were receiving education in residential schools for the blind (25 at Perkins Institution) on Department of Education scholarships, and 122 were in other schools, hospitals and institutions; 133 were receiving aid to the blind in June 1947 through the Division of Public Assistance, with the average payment in that month of $41.25. 372 individuals were served through social service during the year, and 140 through the home teachers; the unduplicated total was 437, of whom 105 were new to the Bureau. These were distributed throughout the State with the exception of the towns of Middletown, Charlestown, Jamestown, Narragansett, New Shoreham, and West Greenwich. Of the 105 new individuals, 27 were referred from personal sources, 38 from public and private social and health agencies, 11 from educational sources, 5 from private physicians, 2 from service clubs, 1 from the Division of Workmen's Compensation, 1 from an insurance company, 1 from the Veterans' Administration, and 1 from an agency for the blind in another State.

YEAR'S WORK, The Blind Register (continued)

This year the Bureau has served for the first time eighteen babies and children, all under 7 years of age, blind from a comparatively new cause,--retrolental fibroplasia. This occurs in babies born so prematurely that only the most recent medical techniques have succeeded in saving their lives. As yet, no medical treatment has been devised for saving their sight, but a Retrolental Fibroplasia Research Foundation is working on this problem and in this connection a large number of New England children are being studied by the Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary. Although Rhode Island and many other States have virtually eliminated several of the potential causes of blindness in children through good health legislation and good law enforcement, the Bureau is faced with the problem of service to a new group of blind children in Rhode Island.

One hundred and forty-one Talking Book Machines owned by the United States Library of Congress were on loan to blind individuals in their own homes on June 30, 1947. The Bureau repairs and replaces these machines which "read" literature from records available by mail postage free from the Regional Library for the Blind at Perkins Institution, Watertown, Massachusetts.

MEDICAL SOCIAL PROGRAM

A comparison of the year 1946-1947 with the previous year of 1945-1946 shows an interesting trend in the volume of work, not only in the figures of the medical social consultant but in the Register. Individual consultations handled by the medical social consultant increased from 451 to 732, while the year's intake of the Bureau increased from 77 to 108. All medical reports have been subjected to careful review, using the valued assistance of the medical consultant and the consulting ophthalmologist as required. A considerable amount of time has been devoted to the coding of the Register, and to the preparation of statistics and other reports, especially those relating to the proposed formation of the Rhode Island Committee for the Conservation of Vision. This year, 8 people were helped to obtain eye operations or treatment which successfully improved vision, 5 of them above the upper level of our definition of blindness, 2 although substantially improved still within the definition of blindness, and 1 is still so young that it is impossible to determine the exact degree of vision. Medical treatment for the correction of other physical defects of several blind people was carried on under the Physical Restoration part of the Vocational Rehabilitation program.

As 1946-1947 drew to a close, the consultant began work on an analysis of the blind Register according to the Standard Classification of Causes of Blindness. Requests for consultation by the State Division of Rehabilitation are on the increase. Referrals to the Bureau of blind persons and of those who are in need of guidance and help in saving remaining vision are coming in regularly from an increasingly varied number of sources.

YEAR'S WORK (continued)

HOME TEACHING

The two home teachers served 39 new, 1 reopened and continued to serve 107 former pupils during the year. They gave 1135 lessons in the homes of the blind, besides making 145 social and 133 other visits. Two new State cars replaced their out-worn cars in October 1946, thereby increasing service. A blind adult who has recently lost his sight is often inspired to new hope by the example of the teacher, who although blind herself is carrying on an active useful life and has learned to master many of the inconveniences of blindness. "Lessons" include many practical methods of carrying on former activities and may include instruction in reading raised print (braille or moon-type), typing, pencil writing, and various types of handwork. Lessons may have as their objective social adjustment, prevocational training, participation in the Home Industries Program, or recreation. During the past year the teachers have given some supplementary academic instruction to blind children homebound for reasons other than blindness, to whom certified visiting teachers are not available. The Bureau has urged the State Department of Education to make provision for this gap in providing education to Rhode Island blind children.

HOME INDUSTRIES

When blind pupils interested in working for home industries have learned to make salable articles the home teachers encourage them to work regularly under the home industries program. The Bureau supplies the material, the home teachers supervise the work as it is done in their homes and continue training in the making of new items. The blind person is paid the first of each month for all work satisfactorily completed during the previous month, and the Bureau sells the goods to the public. This program is financed by a rotary fund and at least $8,500. of the State's money is allocated for this purpose by the State Treasurer. The rotary fund ended the year with a surplus of $238.90, which reverted to the General Treasury. No salaries are charged to the rotary fund and all allowable expenditures are charged to the State appropriation account.

Nine organized sales held in six cities and towns during the year, plus four impromptu sales in connection with other programs, plus office sales, brought in gross sales of $4,639.59. In addition, chair caning brought in $4,175.74; Christmas and other greeting card sales, an estimated $10,263.20; and raw materials were sold to blind workers to fill their own business orders. The total gross business was $18,131.22. One hundred and twenty-seven individuals benefited to the amount of an estimated $10,843.82. Some work quite steadily, others have little time to spend on such activities, but to all it brings a sense of achievement and the satisfaction of earning from a few dollars to a fairly substantial monthly income.

YEAR'S WORK (continued)

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

The rehabilitation program has quadrupled in three years with no increase in staff. It opened in June 1944 with 31 persons. The current year closed with a total of 128. Of these, 27 were still in the referred status; 38 entered during the year; and 17 were receiving adjustment service while employed. These figures do not include the blind persons with whom the opportunity for rehabilitation service was discussed but who were not yet ready to apply.

During the year 23 service plans were completed; 16 into employment; 3 transferred to other agencies; and 4 were discontinued with persons unemployable. 11 persons were placed directly, 1 of them twice, and all were still employed at the close of the year.

The social workers' rehabilitation service totaled: 49 diagnostic studies; 18 referrals to other agencies; 72 medical and eye examinations; 2 psychiatric examinations; medical treatment for 12 persons; psychiatric treatment for 1; surgical for 5; dental for 1; 6 hospitalizations; 1 hearing aid; 10 glasses; and 3 repairs to appliances (hands). Telescopic lenses for two students have made them able to check errors or examine specimens even though they remained handicapped in general reading. One trainee's diet was supplemented by prescribed vitamins to protect residual vision.

The medical social consultant devoted half of her time to the physical restoration aspects of the rehabilitation program, not only for the blind, but for the general vocational rehabilitation program administered by the Department of Education. The acting case work supervisor headed the rehabilitation unit within the Bureau, and she and the administrator devoted at least 25% of their time to the program. The rehabilitation counsellor, who directed the course of all blind rehabilitation clients, devoted full time to the program. In the course of determining their employment objectives, she referred to the senior vending stand supervisor blind candidates whom she considered trainable as vending stand operators and conferred with him as to their progress as trainees.

In vocational guidance and counseling of the blind of employable age and their training and rehabilitation into employment, the rehabilitation counsellor had 420 counseling interviews with blind clients in the office, in their homes, at the training facility, and at the place of employment. Of these interviews, 130 were in regard to training and 71 related to job adjustment. There were 101 consultation staff interviews in regard to 55 clients. Even with thought and effort toward expediting the necessarily slow and painstaking process of rehabilitating the blind, there are no adequate short cuts. Elimination of necessary steps usually results in inadequate counseling, conditioning or readiness, following short of effectual employment.

YEAR'S WORK, Vocational Rehabilitation (continued)

The reasons are apparent when blindness is accompanied by other handicaps. Personality problems and difficult attitudes may further complicate adjustment to a work situation.

Along with the effort to provide rehabilitation service to as many persons as possible, the trend is toward incomplete service, i.e., less rehabilitations into employment--a time consuming later part of the process. However, when the necessary procedures are followed even the multiple handicapped may be rehabilitated to their own great satisfaction. During the year 4 blind persons were in college and made creditable records. Their vocational objectives are music teaching, law, insurance salesmanship, and landscape business. 3 blind persons received tutorial training, 13 pre-vocational training by the blind home teachers, 2 vending stand and 1 jewelry benchwork training. The rehabilitation counsellor conferred with the staff at Perkins Institution concerning 11 Rhode Island blind students nearing completion of their training and with the students concerning their vocational objectives and training leading thereto. Readers were provided the college students and two blind students in public schools. Two typewriters were provided. One student received a braille shorthand machine through a Lions Club. The counsellor secured textbooks during the scarcity for two college students to facilitate their work with their readers.

Eighteen blind persons were given psychological aptitude tests for appraisal of abilities with the service purchased for 4 of them.

In the rehabilitation procedure there was contact with 45 related agencies. State Civil Service examinations were monitored for 2 persons, and 1 person received a temporary job appointment, and another made a civil service job list.

The rehabilitation counsellor visited 93 employers in regard to jobs for blind persons. The year closed with a total of 29 in supervised rehabilitation employment.

The job adjustment aspect of the rehabilitation counsellor's work with the blind is unpredictable in difficulty and in time demand.

Some blind persons long known as "timid", unwilling to venture outside the home unaccompanied or whose families persistently prevent their doing so, have been slowly rehabilitated into gainful employment. Many of these "timid" blind clients became so because at the time of their first availability for employment, they tried desperately to find work with the help of facilities then available to them and were unsuccessful. Others have not yet reached the point of employability.

Increased public education by the rehabilitation service in regard to the work of the blind resulted in increased referrals and reduced resistance to employment of the blind.

YEAR'S WORK, Vocational Rehabilitation (continued)

The sound films "INSTRUCTING THE BLIND WORKER ON THE JOB" and "EMPLOYING BLIND WORKERS IN INDUSTRY" have had 30 showings, 14 of which were during the current fiscal year. A speaker from the staff was included with 29 showings. The total audience was 1,601 persons with groups listed in order of number of engagements: Churches, Social Agencies, P.T.A.'s, Granges, and one each of Labor Unions, Foreign Groups, Civic Clubs, Employment Service, Rhode Island Guidance and Personnel Association, Rhode Island Women's Personnel Club, and Farm and Home Exposition.

The publicity for two vending stand openings during the year in Pawtucket and in Newport involved bringing the work of the blind before a large public and to the two hundred total who attended the openings.

Radio and exhibits have also been used. The staff cooperated in "National Employ-The-Physically-Handicapped Week."

VENDING STANDS

On July 1, 1946, the Bureau for the Blind was operating eight centrally controlled vending stands including the training stand at the Providence County Court House, and a poorly equipped stand at the Newport Post Office, thereby giving employment to eight blind vending stand operators.

On September 1, 1946, the two stands still in operation at the Newport Naval Training Station were closed putting two operators out of work. One bought a car and a trailer and travelled to the west, and the other was later given additional training and employment in the program.

On January 6, 1947, a new stand was opened in the Pawtucket Post Office with the Mayor of Pawtucket as principal speaker before an audience of about a hundred, including most of the membership of the Pawtucket Lions Club. The stand was assigned to a young blind man who had previously been employed at the Newport Naval Training Station until April 1946, and who had since received supplemental training at our Training Stand.

In March 1947, the ten year old stand at the Newport Post Office was replaced by a new specially designed glass-enclosed stand. Gross sales and net proceeds to the blind operator started upwards at once.

The senior vending stand supervisor's successful drive for securing high grade merchandise for which there was public demand and which was still short on the market and his constant watching of prices once again brought the blind operators an increased percentage in net profits.

YEAR'S WORK, Vending Stands (continued)

Continued supplemental business service provided by his assistant, the vending stand supervisor, whose salary is paid out of program receipts, has increased the percent profit of all operators. In one case the increase has been as high as 40%. The gross sales for the year July 1, 1946 to June 30, 1947 were $99,743.70, and the blind operators' net profits for that period amounted to $18,816.50.

Deposits in the Blind Workers News Stand Account during the year were $5,245.42, of which $3,920.10 was collected in agency fees, $317.25 was received in donations ($300. from Newport Lions Club) and $1,008.07 was return of capital on closure of the two Newport Naval Training Stands.

Expenditures from the Blind Workers News Stand Account during the year are listed below:

New Equipment	$2,500.00
Stock	350.00
Insurance	265.69
Salary of vending stand supervisor	1,656.33
Paid to blind substitutes during regular operators' vacations*	207.00
Training pay to blind trainees*	1,235.00
Repairs to equipment	82.40
Miscellaneous	235.62
Total Expenditures	$6,532.04

* Cash expenditures not included in deposits listed above.

The only contribution which the State of Rhode Island made to this virtually self-supporting program was through payment of the salaries of a junior accountant and an account clerk, a major part of whose time was devoted to the vending stand program.

On May 26th, the senior vending stand supervisor held a meeting of blind vending stand operators at the Bureau for the Blind. The director of the Department of Social Welfare, the administrator of the Bureau, and the vending stand supervisor also attended, and all took part in the discussion of mutual problems. The purpose of the meeting was twofold: 1st, to explain to the operators how the agency fee of 3% of gross sales had been spent, and why; 2nd, to aid the operators in the approach to the post war business era by discussing merchandising problems and business methods.

The Federal Office of Vocational Rehabilitation paid most of the salary of the senior vending stand supervisor because most of his time was devoted to promotion of new business opportunities for the blind.

YEAR'S WORK, Vending Stands (continued)

During the year 21 sites were studied by the senior vending stand supervisor for the possible location of future vending stands. Seven were temporarily dropped as there did not appear to be enough space to build a stand large enough to afford a business opportunity to a blind operator. Three early applications were made in buildings still under construction and further action is pending; 4 were pending decision of building management; 4 were being studied further to enable a decision as to whether they would support stands; 1 location was being observed as a probable site, to be opened in the very near future, and 2 locations were awaiting the completion of designs for the necessary store fixtures in order to open 2 new vending stands.

During the study of locations it became apparent that there would be a need for a broader Business Enterprises Program for the Blind in Rhode Island, as in other states. The possibility of opening gift shops or greeting card shops in smaller cities and towns was discussed as well as the home manufacture and marketing of coat hangers and other simple products. The trend of thinking is toward a fourfold Business Enterprises program including selling, manufacturing, repairing, and agricultural pursuits.

In all, three blind operators were trained or re-trained at the new training stand during the year. The year ended with 7 well-equipped vending stands in operation and one private industrial cafeteria receiving service. In spite of the closing of two wartime locations all regular operators were employed, one receiving supplemental training at the training stand while awaiting a new location. On June 30, 1947, the Blind Workers News Stand Account had a balance of $2,827.77.

CONSERVATION OF VISION

Three meetings of the Governor's Advisory Council for the Blind this year were largely devoted to discussion of the need for a Conservation of Vision Program in Rhode Island. Consultation service was provided by the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. Three members of the Advisory Council headed by the Department's consulting ophthalmologist as chairman, waited upon Governor Pastore on December 30, 1946 to ask him to appoint a representative committee to study the problem. Governor Pastore invited twenty-one leaders in the fields of health, education, welfare and labor to form the Rhode Island Committee on Conservation of Vision. All accepted and eighteen were present at its first meeting held in the State House on June 18, 1947. The consulting ophthalmologist was elected chairman and six sub-committees were appointed to study various phases of the problem.

COSTS

The actual expenditures for operating the Bureau for the Blind for the year 1946-1947 are listed below:

State Appropriation:		
Personal Services	$25,395.08	
Operating	6,597.33	
Capital Outlay	77.12	
Case Service	3,733.30	$35,802.83
Federal Grant - Vocational Rehabilitation of the Blind		15,941.30
Grand Total Spent		$51,744.13

NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A - Education of the Blind

The State Department of Education pays tuition and maintenance for blind children who are able to benefit from education at Perkins Institution for the Blind at Watertown, Massachusetts. However, the problems listed below are not now the responsibility of the State Department of Education or of any other agency.

(1) There are students who receive some sight restoration while in schools for the blind and who are then transferred to the public schools and also other partially sighted children in sighted schools who are unable to function as sighted persons without extra service. There are no funds provided for elementary and secondary pupils for readers or tutors to assist in work in narrative subjects or in such subjects as mathematics when pupils cannot see the blackboard. Beyond the junior high level, there are no books published in clear type. Only in Providence are sight-saving classes available. It is impractical for all partially-sighted pupils to be transported to Providence sight saving classes. Not all local school departments will pay tuition to Providence sight saving classes. It is impractical for young pupils to board in Providence for this training. No funds are provided for board payments. An excessive amount of staff time of the State Bureau for the Blind is required in the induction of partially sighted pupils in sighted schools, for interpretation to teachers of the degree to which pupils can function in a sighted school and, in some instances, for instruction of teachers in methods of teaching partially sighted pupils.

(2) Visiting teachers of public school systems seldom include home-bound blind children or those confined to hospitals among their pupils. Teaching of braille to blind children who are home-bound or hospitalized should be provided by certified visiting teachers who have had specialized training.

Needs and Recommendations (continued)

(3) There are approximately 22 pre-school blind children in Rhode Island for all but a few of whom no educational opportunity is available on a pre-school or kindergarten level. Two have been admitted to nursery schools for sighted children and are making progress. Funds should be made available for children needing this service whose parents are unable to pay for it.

B - Personnel Needs

(1) Although the new Civil Service Pay Plan which becomes effective on July 1, 1947 will relieve many of our compensation problems, the pay ranges for three classes will still be too low to recruit and retain qualified personnel: senior vending stand supervisor, rehabilitation counsellor, and home industries supervisor.

(2) The new position of case work supervisor is badly needed to supervise the work of 3 social workers and 2 home teachers, to coordinate their work with that of our 2 consultants (medical social and rehabilitation counsellor) and to direct the work of the Bureau in the absence of the administrator.

C - Need for Legislative Action and Public Education include the following:

(1) There is need for public education in the areas of sight conservation and the prevention of blindness. We hope that this need will be met as the result of the efforts of the new Rhode Island Committee on Conservation of Vision.

(2) All blindness and all eye conditions offering a serious threat of blindness should be reportable by law to the State Bureau for the Blind. Since no other agency is now equipped to serve persons with serious visual handicaps above the blind level, whether or not progressive, below the age of 16, it may be advisable for the Bureau to extend its services to this group.

(3) Service to the visually handicapped but not blind is neglected throughout the State except for sight saving classes for a few living in or near Providence and service to those over sixteen from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Department of Education. That Division's increased interest in service to the visually handicapped is commendable.

(4) Legislation is needed to enable the Bureau to broaden the scope of the present vending stand program so as to participate in the Federal Business Enterprises Program, whereby Rhode Island may receive federal funds to assist in establishing new locations and a wider variety of business enterprises for the blind.

3 0112 098226399